

**Appropriations Committee**  
**SUPPORT: Executive Budget Charter School Per Pupil Increase**  
**Tuesday, March 9, 2021**

Dear Members of the Appropriations Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to speak before you. I would like to first thank you for your support on behalf of all public school children. I am part of a village that prays for greater opportunities for my children and those of my community in Bridgeport CT.

We are a community of more than 11,000 families, supporters and 21 schools in over 10 Connecticut cities and towns. We demand the end of inequitable funding for charter school students. In addition, that public school funding be student focused, equitable regardless of race, class, zip code or type of school they attend. I also ask that you help us secure the funding for Danbury prospect to open and for Stamford Excellence to secure its middle school grades.

My name is Heather Morales- I was born and bred in Bridgeport, my husband and I have 3 school aged children and my niece- they attend Jettie Tisdale and Great Oaks. My two older boys are in their twenties, one has children of his own, the other is a business owner. My oldest sons attended Trumbull schools; we have always sought better school options.

Currently the toughest decision I had to make last year was splitting my kids up- since Great Oaks did not have the grade available for my youngest. That was very tough for our family and continues to be very difficult.

Having quality school options is vital for my family. When I was going to School it was rough for me- I had difficulty with math and speech- overall learning challenges, I did not get any help. It is hard growing up thinking there is something wrong with you, when in fact all I needed was the right help and tools to learn. My son has an IEP and I am fighting for him to get what he needs. The last thing I want is for him to grow up and experience what I went through.

I have not given up on myself I am back trying to extend and finish where I left off.....Even though school in the 80's/90's was not as stressful as it is on our children today- we are very limited.

Bottom line education helps us in each and every field of our life. A quality education equals success; success can be achieved when people have knowledge, skills and the right attitude. If we as a community, really want to make a profound impact in the struggles our families and children are going through- we must invest in their educational needs, period!

I am one parent writing to you today, but as I stated before, we are a large community who aims to make real change and it starts with bringing forth equity in education.

Finally, the Covid pandemic had made a profound impact and shifted our lives & daily routines. We have been impacted financially, emotionally and physically. We are no longer a two person working household. I had no choice but to stay home with the children, no one is going to watch them all- as well as school them. They are of different ages and stages in education-they need to be in school learning! This is all very difficult for everyone.

Lets lock arms together and put our children's needs above all. I am ready to be a voice in this fight!

Please reach out to me with any questions or concerns.

Best regards,

Heather Morales

